

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 08574 151859Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 /030 W
-----152316Z 080729 /61

R 151243Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4113
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL MADRAS
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 8574

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IN, UR
SUBJ: SOVIET DEPUTY FORMIN FIRYUBIN STOPS OVER FOR TALKS

1. SOVIET DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ,P. FIRYUBIN STOPPED
OVER IN NEW DELHI FOR OFFICIAL LEVEL TALKS ON JUNE 9
AND 10. THE SOVIET SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA EXPERT WAS
ENROUTE BACK TO MOSCOW FOLLOWING VISITS IN VIET NAM,
LAOS, BURMA, AND NEPAL. HE MET WITH MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS SECRETARY M.A. VELLODI, THE RANKING OFFICIAL IN
TOWN DURING THE VISIT.

2. SOVIET POLITICAL COUNSELOR FIALKOVSKY TOLD EMBASSY
OFFICERS ON JUNE 13 THAT THE VISIT ENTAILED DISCUSSIONS
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OF FIRYUBIN'S FINDINGS ON HIS TRIP AND PROVIDED AN
OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS INDO-SOVIET RELATIONS. THE
COUNSELOR WAS INCLINED TO DOWNPLAY THE IMPORTANCE OF
THE VISIT, POINTING OUT THAT NO ONE WAS IN TOWN AT THE
TIME, AND THAT FIRYUBIN HAD USED THE SECOND DAY FOR
SHOPPING. HE SAID THE PRINCIPAL TARGET OF FIRYUBIN'S
JOURNEY HAD BEEN HIS VISIT TO HANOI.

3. WE HAVE HEARD FROM A RELIABLE INDIAN JOURNALIST THAT ARVIND R. DEO, THE MEA'S DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION, SAID THAT FIRYUBIN'S UNEXPECTED VISIT WAS AT HIS INITIATIVE. ACCORDING TO DEO, FIRYUBIN WANTED TO ALLAY ANY POSSIBLE INDIAN SUSPICION THAT THERE WAS A SOVIET ROLE IN THE ANTI-INDIAN STATEMENTS BY NEPALI PREMIER GIRI WHICH COINCIDED WITH FIRYUBIN'S STAY IN KATHMANDU.

4. COMMENT. WHAT PRECISELY WAS DISCUSSED DURING THE VISIT IS UNCLEAR, BUT THE STOP-OVER ITSELF CAME AS A SURPRISE TO THE GOI. THE JOINT SECRETARY WHO HANDLES SOVIET AFFAIRS SUDDENLY DEFERRED HIS LEAVE FOR THE VISIT. FIRYUBIN HIMSELF WAS IN DELHI DURING THE GROMYKO VISIT APRIL 25-29. GENERAL PAVLOVSKY SPENT A WEEK IN INDIA IN LATE MAY. THE SOVIETS, IT WOULD SEEM, ARE TAKING PAINS TO KEEP IN CLOSE CONTACT AT HIGH LEVELS WITH THE GOI, AND APPEAR EAGER TO UNDERSCORE THE CONTINUITY OF THE TIES.
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